

CORRECTION OFFICERS CERTIFICATION COMMISSION (COCC) PUBLIC HEARING

Date: 04-01-04

Time: 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P. M.

Location: DOC Missouri Vocational Enterprises (MVE) Complex, 1717 Industrial Drive, Jefferson City, Missouri, Rooms 3A & 3B

AGENDA TOPICS:	PERSON RESPONSIBLE:
Call hearing to order	Gary Kempker
Introduction of Commissioners	Commissioners
Opening remarks	Gary Kempker
Hearing Protocol	Chris Egbert
Public Comments	Attendees

MEETING OUTCOME: If this were a successful meeting it would result in

The Correction Officers Certification Commission receiving input from the public on:

1. Basic hiring qualifications for Correction Officers
2. Training standards for entry level Correction Officers
3. Certification testing requirements for Correction Officers

KEY POINTS:

Missouri Department of Corrections (DOC) Director Gary Kempker called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Commissioners present were Micki Knowles, David Topash, Conrad Sutton, Samuel Shipman and Roger Beamer.

The following individuals were in the audience, Royce Hudson from Department of Corrections Training Academy, Gary Gross, Missouri Correction Officers Association, Mark Nichols, Randolph County Sheriff's Office, Gloria Badding, Department of Corrections, Les Balty, Department of Corrections, Sharyl Blevins, Department of Corrections, Maureen Olson, Department of Corrections, Marvin Pruett, Department of Corrections, Randy Pittman, Platte County Sheriff's Department, Neil Sletten, Howell County Sheriff's Department, Robbie Crites, Howell County Sheriff's Department, Lisa Smitz, Randolph County Sheriff's Office, Kathy Hetzel, Department of Corrections, Rick Enyard, Department of Corrections, John Bowen, Department of Corrections, Bob McKlin, Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, Dwayne Kempker, Department of Corrections, Jim Petty, Morgan County Sheriff's Department, M.W. Beck, citizen of Jefferson City, Tim Harlin, Morgan County Sheriff's Department, Mick Covington, Missouri Sheriff's Training Academy and Bryan Goeke, Department of Corrections.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Kempker welcomed those individuals in attendance. He emphasized the importance of the Commission's work, as well as the importance of setting standards for the profession of Correction Officer.

INTRODUCTIONS/BACKGROUND OF COMMISSIONERS

Each Commissioner was asked to introduce themselves.

Hearing Protocol

Chris Egbert, COCC DOC liaison reviewed the hearing protocol.

1. Each person that wanted to provide comments to the Commission was asked to fill out a form listing their name, address, and phone #.
2. Each person addressing the Commission was asked to come forward, one at a time, seat themselves at a table in front of the Commission and provide their comments.
3. The Commissioners would then ask any follow-up or clarifying questions.

Update on JTA

Chris Egbert provided the attendees information pertaining to the state wide Job Task Analysis.

Director Gary Kempker in conjunction with the Corrections Officer Certification Commission (COCC) has directed that a statewide Job Task Analysis (JTA) be conducted on the position of DOC Correction Officer I and Missouri correction officer and jailer. The Director will use the JTA to provide the basis for the Director's certification of corrections officers and jailers.

So what is a JTA? A JTA is a critical first step to, and serves as the foundation for, many human resources functions and decisions, including but not limited to recruitment, selection, and training. A JTA involves the collection and synthesis of data that describes job behaviors, attributes of workers, and characteristics of the environment in which workers perform the various activities of the job.

DOC has contracted with Caliber Associates from Fairfax, Virginia to conduct the JTA. Over the next seven months members from this firm will be in the state gathering needed information to make recommendations to DOC and the COCC on the minimum standards for the certification of correction officers and jailers.

Based upon the results of the JTA, Caliber Associates will provide written recommendations to the Director and the COCC on the following:

A. Pre-Employment Educational Requirements:

1. Need for pre-employment education;
2. Curriculum content; and
3. Length of curriculum.

B. Employment Selection Criteria:

1. Physical test requirements and methods;
2. Psychological testing and/or personality assessment;
3. Interview questions and methods;
4. Physical conditions including strength, auditory acuity, visual acuity, olfactory acuity, tactility, mobility and range of motion; and
5. Written and verbal communication skills.

C. New Employee Training Requirements including:

1. Need for new employee training;
2. Curriculum content for general, specific and task required training; and
3. Length of curriculum, by subject.

D. Specific length, content and training method of an on-the-job training (OJT) program.

Public Comments

The following is the main points made by those addressing the Commission:

Gary Gross, Director of Missouri Corrections Officer Association, Inc.

- His membership has concerns over Grandfathering for those officers currently working in corrections.
- Concerns over additional training requirements for certification.
- Concerns over physical fitness requirements for current employees. If anything, increase the physical requirements at hiring. Let attrition and retirement weed out the others.

Randy Pittman– Captain, Platte County Sheriff Jail Administrator

- Asked that the Commission consider the non-applicability of this type of oversight to jails. There is a difference between corrections officers and peace officers. Most Sheriffs run their jails with licensed peace officers.
- Chapter 221 governs jail operations for Sheriff's offices in Missouri. Because of this consideration should be given to removing county jailers from this oversight process. Unlike peace officers this oversight by the state is affecting a particular part of the Sheriff's mission as granted by the Constitution of the State of Missouri.
- Something that is voluntary today soon becomes mandatory through this type of oversight process.

Mike Beck, citizen of Jefferson City (Former 2 year DOC employee)

- DOC is different from county sheriff.
- Would like to see a part-time position within DOC.
- There should be a separate certification for corrections officers. Not the same peace officers.

- Would like to see on the job training (OJT) in addition to basic training before a DOC officer is turned out on their own.
- Officers think of the position of Correction Officers in DOC as a job, not a profession.

Jim Petty, Sheriff Morgan County

- Pleased that this is a voluntary program
- Mandatory regulations would make it difficult to hire jailers.
- It would be a burden on smaller counties, if there were stiffer mandatory regulations. It would prevent them from hiring jail personnel, in addition to the cost associated with training.
- There is a fear of being over regulated by the state.

Dr. Rick Enyard, DOC Personnel Director

- The Commission should consider the public relations aspect of improving the image of the profession of correction officer to the public.
- The Commission should look at the different pay scales for entry-level officers based on the level of education and experience.
- The Commission should take a look at the retention issues associated with the correction officer position.

Mick Covington, Director Missouri Sheriff's Training Academy

- The MSTA provides training to jailers. They don't do a lot of this type of training because of the cost of the training. Sheriff's department s cannot afford it.
- Consideration should be given to a funding mechanism to help pay for the cost of training associated with certification. Small counties will not be able to comply without some financial assistance.
- Thought needs to be given to continuing education after certification.
- The training of corrections officers is extremely important not only for the officer but for the inmate.
- It doesn't do any good for an insurance company to be willing to lower their insurance rate if a sheriff's corrections officers are certified if the sheriff cannot afford the cost associated with certification. It may, in fact cost them money in a lawsuit if their officers are not certified even if it is voluntary.

Bryan Goeke, DOC Assistant Division Director

- The Commission should give consideration to the physical fitness standards for DOC staff. When staff are not physically fit to respond to emergencies it not only puts their fellow staff at risk it also puts the inmates as well as themselves at risk.

Lt. Bob McKlin, Jefferson County Sheriff's Department

- Have concerns about the certification of correction officers becoming mandatory. If the certification went from voluntary to mandatory his department would have a problem with that.
- The individuals conducting the JTA should give consideration to the National Sheriffs Association Training material, as far as standards go.
- The cost associated with training would be an additional burden for their department.

Royce Hudson, DOC Director of Training

- There needs to be a DOC Certification Manager - a person to track the certification of state and county certified correction officers.
- Sheriffs department can send their deputies to DOC Training Academy for training. As long as there is no cost to DOC.

The hearing was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

MEMBERS NOT ATTENDING:

David Brown, Thomas Greenwell, John Waldschlager and Walter Foster

ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Develop meeting minutes	Peggy Huddleston	04-01-04
Place the minutes on the COCC Web-site	Jenny Wehmeyer	ASAP

NEXT MEETING:

Date: TBD

Time: TBD

Location: TBD